

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A data exchange system for use in vehicle assembly, comprising:
 - a portable memory device adapted to interface with a communications port of a particular type;
 - an external processor having a datastore of vehicle software and adapted to operate as a source of vehicle software via a first communications port of the particular type; and
 - a vehicle at least temporarily having a second communications port of the particular type and adapted to exchange data between multiple processors of the vehicle and the external processor via the portable memory device.
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising:
 - a controller of a controller area network connected to a system bus of the vehicle and networked adjacent to the multiple processors;
 - an interface processor in communication with the second communications port and said controller, wherein said interface processor is adapted to automatically recognize said portable memory device upon connection of said memory device to the second communications port.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein said controller is temporarily networked adjacent to the multiple processors via an alternative connection mechanism.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein said multiple processors are adapted to write data to said portable memory device following load of vehicle software from said portable memory device to said multiple processors, and said external processor is adapted to analyze data written to said portable memory device upon connection of the portable memory device to the first communications port.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the particular type of the communications port is universal serial bus, and said portable memory device is a universal serial bus port flash memory disk.

6. A data exchange system for use in vehicle assembly, comprising:
a wireless data exchange mechanism adapted to communicate with
a communications network;
an external processor having a datastore of vehicle software and
adapted to operate as a source of vehicle software via the communications
network; and
a vehicle at least temporarily adapted to exchange data between
multiple processors of the vehicle and the external processor via said wireless
data exchange mechanism.

7. The system of claim 6, further comprising a controller of a controller
area network connected to a system bus of the vehicle and networked adjacent
to the multiple processors, wherein said controller is in communication with said
wireless communication mechanism.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein said controller is temporarily
networked adjacent to the multiple processors via an alternative connection
mechanism.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein the multiple processors are adapted to request vehicle software from said external processor and to transmit non-request data to the external processor following load of vehicle software from said external server, and said external processor is adapted to analyze non-request data received from the multiple processors.

10. The system of claim 6, wherein the wireless data exchange mechanism is an iCHIP internet controller.

11. A data exchange method for use in vehicle assembly, comprising:
alternating connection of a portable memory device between an external processor and a vehicle;
transferring vehicle software from the external processor to the portable memory device during connection of the portable memory device to the external processor;
transferring data from the portable memory device to a processor of the vehicle upon connection of the portable memory device to the vehicle.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising employing an interface processor in communication with an open architecture communications port and a controller area network controller to at least temporarily provide connectivity between the portable memory device and the vehicle.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising temporarily networking the controller adjacent to the vehicle processor via an alternative connection mechanism.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising employing a universal serial bus flash disk as the portable memory device.

15. The method of claim 11, further comprising:
writing data back to the portable memory device following transfer of the data from the portable memory device to the processor of the vehicle; and
analyzing the data written back to the portable device upon connection of the portable device to the external processor.

16. A data exchange method for use in vehicle assembly;

establishing a wireless connection between an external processor and a vehicle processor via a wireless communication mechanism at least temporarily provided to the vehicle, wherein the external processor is adapted to serve as a source of vehicle software;

transmitting a request for vehicle software from the vehicle processor to the external processor via the wireless communication mechanism;
and

transmitting the vehicle software from the external processor to the vehicle processor via the wireless communication mechanism, wherein said transmitting the vehicle software occurs in response to the request.

17. The method of claim 16, further at least temporarily connecting a controller of a controller area network to a system bus of the vehicle, wherein said controller is in communication with said wireless communication mechanism.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising temporarily networking the controller adjacent to the multiple processors via an alternative connection mechanism.

19. The method of claim 16, further comprising:

transmitting a request for vehicle software to said external processor;

transmitting non-request data to the external processor following load of vehicle software from said external server; and

analyzing non-request data received from the multiple processors.

20. The method of claim 16, further comprising employing an iCHIP internet controller as the wireless data exchange mechanism.